



# Meeting Summary

## Upper San Joaquin Regional Conditions Work Group Meeting #7

**December 10, 2009, 10:00 am – 2:00 pm**

**Location: Lower San Joaquin Levee District  
11704 W. Henry Miller Ave.  
Dos Palos, CA, 93620**

### WORK GROUP ATTENDANCE:

Name	Organization	Status
Margit Aramburu	University of the Pacific, Natural Resources Institute	Member
S. Leo Capuchino	City of Mendota	Member
Reggie Hill	Lower San Joaquin Levee District	Member
Kellie Jacobs	County of Merced	Member
Jerry Lakeman	Fresno Metropolitan Flood Control District	Member
Bill Luce	Friant Water Authority	Member
Richard Harmon	Landowner/Grower, Dos Palos, Calif.	Member
John Shelton	CA Department of Fish and Game	Member
Gary Hester	California Department of Water Resources (DWR)	CVFMP* Program Manager
Brian Smith	DWR	DWR Lead
Roger Lee	DWR	CVFPO**
Ernie Taylor	DWR	DWR Lead (alternate)
Eric Clyde	MWH	Technical Lead
Alexa La Plante	MWH	Team
Pam Jones	Kearns & West	Team, Facilitator
Ben Gettleman	Kearns & West	Facilitation Support

\* Central Valley Flood Management Planning

\*\*Central Valley Flood Planning Office

### Absent:

Randall Anthony	Merced Irrigation District	Member
Julia Berry	Madera Farm Bureau	Member
Sarge Green	CA Water Institute, CSU Fresno	Member
Dave Koehler	San Joaquin River Parkway and Conservation Trust	Member
Mari Martin	Resource Management Coalition	Member
Diana Westmoreland Pedrozo	Merced County Farm Bureau	Member
Jose Ramirez	City of Firebaugh	Member
Paul Romero	DWR, Flood Plain Management Division	Member

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Monty Schmitt	Natural Resources Defense Council	Member
John Slater	County of Madera, Resource Management Agency	Member
David van Rijn	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	Member
Douglas Welch	Chowchilla Water District	Member

### Observers:

Greg Farley	Madera County Resource Management Agency
Hoa Ly	DWR
Steve Stadler	Kings River Conservation District

### WORK GROUP HOMEWORK/ACTION ITEMS

- Review and provide comments on Chapters 4 and 5 by December 21, 2009.
- Review and provide comments on the Additional Objectives section of the *Objectives to be Explored* sheet.
- Encourage members to attend the Valley-wide Forum (February 3, 2010).

Homework assignments should be sent to DWR lead Brian Smith, [besmith@water.ca.gov](mailto:besmith@water.ca.gov) with a copy to MWH lead Eric Clyde, [Eric.S.Clyde@us.mwhglobal.com](mailto:Eric.S.Clyde@us.mwhglobal.com).

### ACTION ITEMS: PROGRAM TEAM

1. Ben Gettleman, Kearns & West, will confirm the meeting location for Meeting #8.
2. DWR will investigate the possibility of mapping the urban areas within the Systemwide Planning Area to show where they are located.

### GROUP RECAP (meeting highlights for use by Work Group partners in their communications)

The Work Group of the Central Valley Flood Management Program (CVFMP) continued its work on December 10, 2009 with the following actions:

- Reviewed the process roadmap for the remainder of 2009 and 2010.
- Reviewed and provided comments on revised CVFPP Potential Objectives.
- Provided feedback on the work group process to date.

The purpose of the Work Group is to contribute to the development of content for the Regional Conditions Report (RCR), which is a key component for developing the 2012 CVFPP. The RCR will identify resources, conditions within the Central Valley, flood management and related problems and opportunities, and goals and objectives for use in preparing the CVFPP. The Work Group is one of five regional work groups for the CVFMP.

### FUTURE MEETINGS SCHEDULED

Meeting #8: January 27, 2009  
9:00am – 1:00pm  
Tentative location:  
UC Merced Cooperative Extension  
2145 Wardrobe Avenue  
Merced, CA 95341-6445

### MEETING GOALS

1. Review roadmap for remainder of 2009 and early 2010 (Schedule for Document Review)
2. Continue discussion of Objectives and walk through Chapter 4
3. Request preliminary feedback
4. Discuss next steps

### SUMMARY

#### Welcome and Greetings

Pam Jones, meeting facilitator, welcomed the Work Group participants and reviewed the meeting purpose, goals and agenda.

#### Opening Remarks

Gary Hester, CVFMP Program Manager, welcomed the Work Group and provided opening remarks. Mr. Hester also reviewed with the group the *Responses to Questions from Meetings #5 and #6*. Key comments and follow-up questions during the group discussion included:

- **Question #2** – Clarification of the requirements of urban level of flood protection in land use planning by local jurisdictions within the Sacramento-San Joaquin Valley

Gary Hester noted that the general plans of local jurisdictions within the Sacramento-San Joaquin Valley would need to be adopted 24 months after the 2012 adoption of the CVFPP and that zoning ordinances would need to be consistent with the local general plan 12 months after its adoption. Mr. Hester added that DWR recognizes the challenge for communities to meet these requirements and that criteria will need to be developed to help communities meet them. Mr. Hester noted that DWR may charter a Work Group to help develop these criteria.

Q: This response references the FEMA 500-year floodplain. What is a 500-year flood?

A: FEMA has developed 500-year flood maps for many areas. DWR is using these maps to identify moderate flood risk areas. *(Note: According to the USGS, the term "500-year flood" refers to a potentially imprecise statistical estimate of a flood flow that has a 1 in 500 chance, or in other words a .2 percent chance, of being exceeded in any one year. Their primary use is for determining flood insurance rates in flood hazard areas.)*

Q: When was the last time a 500-year flood occurred? Should local communities prepare for a 500-year flood?

A: Generating the 500-year floodplain is a statistical computation that depends on many factors, including contributing inputs to the system.

Q: What duration of storm will be used to generate the 200-year and 500-year flood maps?

A: The new hydrology is still being developed. A 30-day storm series will be used.

- **Question #3 – Revised CVFPP Planning Areas**

Gary Hester noted that the planning team is working on identifying specific boundaries to make sure there is clarity when the discussion of management actions begins.

Comment: The Penoché-Silver Creek watershed area is not included in the CVFPP planning area. There has been flooding in this area in the past.

Response: The study team is taking this area into consideration using a two-dimensional model. This area is included in the Watershed Planning Area (WPA).

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Q: Is it correct that the CVFPP can identify management actions (and that funding may be available) for areas even if they are outside of the WPA?

A: Yes, this is correct. The key factor is that the management action should provide benefits to the system-wide planning area.

Q: What are the implications regarding responsibility to local planning agencies?

A: Urban areas within the larger WPA will be required to meet the 200-year level of flood protection for development within the floodplain. Jurisdictions outside of the WPA will not be required to meet this standard. DWR is committed to working cooperatively with local representatives to clarify the definition of the southern boundary.

### • Question #4 – Revised Sacramento-San Joaquin Valley

A Work Group member referred to the current map of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Valley and noted that the boundary from the Bulletin 160 map looks very similar to that of the Bulletin 118 map.

Comment: The Bulletin 160 map began as a detailed hydrologic unit made up by DAUs (smaller hydrologic units). The areas don't necessarily match.

Q: If the dashed line on the map refers to the correct southern boundary, will that be the southern boundary for the WPA as well?

A: There will need to be additional discussion on how best to handle this issue. This version of the map is intended to acknowledge and memorialize that the conversation has started.

Gary Hester noted that the first Interim Levee Design Criteria (ILDC) meeting, an extension of the Levee Performance Work Group, took place on Tuesday, December 8, 2009 at MWH in Sacramento. He added that the purpose of this committee is to provide feedback on DWR's levee design criteria for urban areas but that this will have implications on local levee districts as well.

Mr. Hester also shared that he plans to leave DWR this month. He thanked the Work Group for being part of the CVFPP development process and noted that their participation is very important. Mr. Hester added that he will try to provide guidance during the transition for his replacement.

## Review of Meeting #6 Action Items

Roger Lee, DWR, reviewed the list of action items from Meeting #6 and provided updates:

1. Roger Lee will inform Upper San Joaquin Regional Conditions Work Group (Work Group) members when the O&M manual DVD is ready and how to access it.  
**Status:** Ongoing
2. Gary Hester will work with DWR and Fresno Metropolitan Flood Control District to revise the planning area map to accurately reflect the southern boundary.  
**Status:** Ongoing

## Roadmap for Remainder of 2009 and Early 2010

Eric Clyde, MWH, presented the CVFPP development timeline and identified where the Work Group currently resides in the plan development process. Key milestones over the next several months include:

- Work group partners should have received RCR Chapters 4 and 5 (covering goals, objectives, principles, and requirements) on December 7, 2009.
  - Work group comments on RCR Chapters 4 and 5 will be due on December 21, 2009.
- Work group partners will receive the Regional Conditions Summary (RCS) on January 13, 2009.
  - Work group comments on the RCS will be due on January 27, 2010.
- The Valley-Wide Forum will be held on February 3, 2010.

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- Potential Management Actions Work Groups will begin in February 2010.

Q: Will the next round of Work Groups continue to be regional?

A: Yes. Work Group member input will be important in helping the planning team define the next round of Work Groups. Some Work Group members have requested more interaction with other regional Work Groups. The planning team needs to determine the best way to promote interaction between groups.

### Continue Discussion of Objectives

Eric Clyde presented the refinement of CVFPP Objectives (Chapter 5). Pam Jones led the group through a discussion of the revised objectives (Objectives to be explored); the content of the discussion is captured in the table below.

Category of Objectives	Objectives to be Explored	Work Group Comments
Flood risk	Provide 200-year (or greater) level of flood protection to all urban and urbanizing areas in the Sacramento - San Joaquin Valley by December 31, 2025, and to provide interim 100-year protection by 2015.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The definition of urbanizing areas should be made clearer by mapping them.</li> </ul>
Flood risk	Develop a set of guidelines for providing flood protection to rural communities and agricultural areas in the Sacramento – San Joaquin Valley by December 31, 2025.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This planning process still needs to decide how to address flood protection for rural communities and agricultural lands.</li> <li>• The key issue is, how feasible and necessary is it to provide 100-year protection to agricultural land?</li> <li>• The new guidelines should acknowledge that it isn't feasible for all rural areas to meet the 100 year floor protection level.</li> <li>• Develop the appropriate guidelines with the understanding that some agricultural lands may not need it.</li> <li>• Farmers will take care of their own land's flood issues, but in doing so may channel the water toward a community.</li> <li>• The water that starts to back up toward the City of Huron has reverted into natural habitat. There is some rural land that can be saved and other land that cannot be saved.</li> <li>• The date should be changed to 2015.</li> </ul>
Ecosystem Restoration	Increase shaded riverine aquatic habitat by XXX acres, in a manner consistent with risk reduction and flood capacity goals, with a focus on areas of habitat discontinuity, by	<p>First Paragraph</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using river miles is more appropriate than acreage. There may be a number that could be</li> </ul>

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	<p>2025.</p> <p>Increase floodplain habitat by XXX acres, in a manner consistent with risk reduction and flood capacity goals, with a focus on areas of habitat discontinuity and where wetlands can be restored, by 2025.</p>	<p>developed such as a percentage, but this would depend on the system.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Significant riparian vegetation along small tributaries is removed completely because of development, fire, or invasive species.</li> <li>The 2025 goals should set interim goals to evaluate progress.</li> <li>The difference between riverine banks and the levees should be clarified.</li> </ul> <p>Second Paragraph</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Acreage is relevant for this statement, but perhaps it should be divided into levels of flood frequency (i.e. during an x-year event, y# of acres of floodplain habitat should be increased).</li> </ul>
Ecosystem Restoration	<p>Increase the area (by TBD acres) and frequency of inundated floodplain habitat within the flood management system that provides conditions suitable for spawning and rearing native fish by 20XX.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use 2025 as the date but have interim goals.</li> </ul>
Streamlined Permitting	<p>Establish a system-wide /streamlined permitting process to reduce the cost and duration of obtaining permits for design and construction, maintenance, and recovery by 2015.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recommend earlier – 2010.</li> <li>“Permitting” needs to be clarified.</li> <li>The CEQA permitting process is almost all county/city-based, so we are taking away some of their authority if we do this. The local jurisdictions may not want to give up their authority.</li> <li>Streamlined permitting always sounds good, but sometimes local jurisdictions don't want to give up their ways of doing things.</li> <li>The county and city jurisdictions would be sub-components of the system.</li> <li>Any new flood control project should come with a no-expiration date requirement. The standards should not change.</li> <li>The no-expiration date requirement is problematic because needs change and there needs to be flexibility to adjust the requirements. People issuing</li> </ul>

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		<p>permits can't predict the future.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In addition to permit streamlining, the plan should improve the ability to maintain the system.</li> </ul>
Flood Preparedness and Response	Develop and implement an emergency preparedness plan for all areas covered by the CVFPP that includes elements to incorporate interagency communications to address flood risk, warning and notification, and hazard communication elements by 20XX.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aren't these plans repetitive? Can't they be replicated across counties?</li> <li>Many local jurisdictions with flood responsibilities are required to do this.</li> <li>Inter-area coordination and interagency coordination need to be addressed. Counties and cities that are next to each other need to coordinate together. There needs to be jurisdictional overlap.</li> </ul>
Operation and Maintenance	Achieve 90% annual pass rate for urban levees in the Central Valley when inspected according to Federal and State levee standards (e.g., maintenance, encroachment, etc.) by 2025.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The plan should be aiming for 100%. If it's a safety-related objective, it should be 100%.</li> <li>Some levee districts struggle with the maintenance. It can be a resource issue.</li> </ul>
Operation and Maintenance	Achieve XX% annual pass rate for non-urban levees in the Central Valley when inspected according to Federal and State levee standards (e.g., maintenance, encroachment, etc.) by 2025.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It's not clear why this isn't 100%. It will not look good to the public if the CVFPP is not aiming for 100% standards.</li> <li>This should only apply to non-urban SPFC levees. Private levees are not routinely inspected.</li> <li>Including a measurement is problematic because it can put more liability on the state.</li> <li>DWR legal needs to provide input on a percentage and how that impacts liability.</li> </ul>
Education and Outreach	Implement a focused and continuous outreach program to educate public and political officials on potential flood risk, and to support local agencies on revising their General Plans by 2014.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This objective needs two dates: implement a focused and continuous outreach program by 2012 so that general plans can be revised by 2014.</li> </ul>



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Groundwater Recharge	Divert 50% of the current overdraft, as defined by the state water plan, acre-feet per year (average annual) flood flows to provide conjunctive use benefits by 2050.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This should not be tied to the current overdraft; it should be tied to the actual overdraft of that particular year.</li> <li>• The only way you can do this is if you have the facilities to do it, which is beyond the scope of this plan.</li> <li>• Developing more conjunctive use facilities would be a more appropriate objective.</li> <li>• Suggest rewording to: Increase the capacity by 50% to accept flood waters for groundwater recharge.</li> </ul>
Funding	Establish statutory guidance, standards, policies, and procedures to fund and implement projects and activities that contribute to a system-wide approach to integrated flood management by 2012.	
Land Use	Develop consistent guidelines for conforming to policies specified in the CVFPP for land management within floodplains and floodways by 20XX.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The term floodways is confusing.</li> <li>• When the guidelines are developed, floodways should be clearly defined.</li> </ul>
Land Use	Maintain the viability of agriculture in the flood management system by creating compensation and safe harbor agreements for flood easements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This should be ongoing (i.e., not associated with a date).</li> <li>• Change the beginning of the sentence to "Maintain and enhance the viability..."</li> </ul>
Other Potential Objectives to Explore	Develop a long-term conservation strategy by 2017 that provides effective and efficient sustainable environmental mitigation for flood management activities on a system-wide basis, and results in lasting environmental benefits. <b>(Maybe move to Ecosystem Restoration)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some counties have developed habitat conservation plans; perhaps this should be tied to the HCCPs.</li> <li>• The USACE wants levee vegetation to be addressed immediately, but this objective acknowledges the challenge of meeting this goal (i.e., 2017 instead of 2012).</li> <li>• This addresses the need for broader, inter-connected planning and mitigation.</li> <li>• 2017 might be waiting too long to take advantage of other processes that could be leveraged. Change to 2015.</li> <li>• Move to Ecosystem Restoration.</li> </ul>



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### Preliminary Feedback

Pam Jones informed the group that the planning team would be soliciting feedback in three main areas: process, content and lessons learned. Today's Meeting #7 would be dedicated to soliciting feedback on process. Ms. Jones then introduced the *Process Goals Discussion* sheet, and asked the Work Group members to individually fill out the sheet.

After the sheets were completed, Ms. Jones led a group discussion on the work group process. Her questions and the responses that followed are below:

- What is your level of agreement with how the process has gone so far? (Work Group members were asked to display a closed fist if they were not satisfied, three fingers if they were just satisfied, and five fingers if they were very satisfied).
  - Work group members unanimously responded with five fingers.
- What has worked well?
  - Having a facilitator works well to keep the meeting on track.
  - The planning team's reminder emails have been helpful.
  - Having the opportunity to have discussions instead of formal responses.
- What has been more effective: working in one large group or breaking into smaller groups?
  - At the beginning of a process like this, participants want to learn all viewpoints and you miss that opportunity with break-out groups.
  - Break-out groups are inefficient because we talk about the same thing several times. It can be repetitive.
  - After the third meeting, the group was smaller and there was no need to break out.
  - Bigger sessions require more responsibility from the facilitator
- How have you felt about the level of commitment?
  - It was hard to make adjustments when the meeting dates were set and then changed later. This was disappointing.
  - It is important to have space between meetings; this was one of the reasons for changing the dates.
- What other lessons learned would you like to share?
  - It would have been helpful to have specific invitations to people for addressing specific perspectives, either as permanent members or drop-ins.
  - To improve the next round of Work Groups, it would be helpful to frontload the process with information that is already developed (i.e., ask Reggie Hill to present on levee districts, or ask a member of another Work Group to present on what they've been discussing or how their process is proceeding).
  - It would have been valuable to have the opportunity to provide feedback earlier in the process.
  - Scholarships would be helpful to better involve environmental justice representatives and others.
- Were any additional perspectives missing from the Work Group?
  - Farm workers or farm worker advocates
  - More environmentalists

### Next Steps, Meeting Recap

Pam Jones reviewed the meeting goals and confirmed that they were achieved during the meeting. She also encouraged Work Group members to attend the Valley-wide Forum and to invite other stakeholders who might be interested in attending. Gary Hester outlined the format of the Valley-wide Forum, noting that recruitment for the next round of Work Groups will begin then.

Mr. Hester noted that the development of the CVFPP is a new process for DWR and that it would be essential to build synergy between state and local entities and to bring the USACE into better alignment

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with the process. He added that the development of the CVFPP should be considered a building block for a permanent structure to resolve flood-related issues and to better address flood management.

Mr. Hester also provided an update on the CVFPB appointment process, noting that there are currently six members serving on the Board and one vacancy which the Governor still needs to fill. Mr. Hester added that the development of the CVFPP may result in the appointment of new CVFPB members and that it would be a priority to have diverse representation both geographically and across several areas of expertise (hydrology, geology, legal, etc.).

Finally, Mr. Hester thanked the Work Group members for their participation and recognized their important contributions to the content and process of the CVFPP development. Brian Smith, DWR, also thanked the members of the group for their participation.